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Montana and the Sky

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MDT Department of Transportation – Aeronautics Division Vol. 47 No. 3 March 1996

1996 Aviation Conference = Success

A stimulating program and "cold but clear" weather attracted over 500 aviation enthusiasts to Helena for the twelfth annual Montana Aviation Conference.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Jerry Cockrell who entertained the crowd with his humorous, yet informative anecdotes; Turner Gauntt, who spoke of his pilot days with the B-58 Hustler program and the world records set by the B-58, some of which still stand; Major Dee Brasseur, one of the first three women pilots in the Canadian military and one of only two female pilots in the world qualified to fly the CF-18 Fighter—an inspiration to all females; and Brian Shul, author and SR-71 Blackbird pilot who told his heroic story of being shot down over Cambodia, not being expected to live, yet coming back to fly the beautiful SR-71—a very courageous individual with a great respect and appreciation for life.

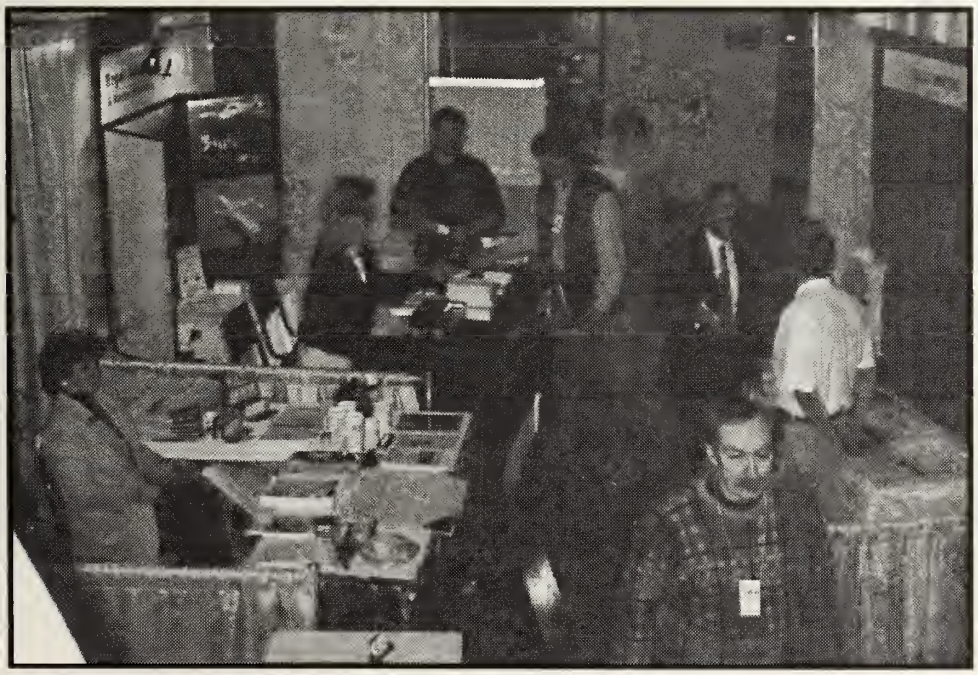
Many other talented speakers covered an array of aviation related topics contributing to an exciting three-day program.

In addition, over forty aviation firms filled the exhibit area with interesting displays of the latest in aviation products and services. These companies and others also contributed thousands of dollars in door prizes which were given away during the conference.

The Montana Aeronautics Division and the Helena Host Committee would like to extend our sincere thanks to the many sponsors, speakers, exhibitors and others who worked so hard to make the 1996 Montana Aviation Conference an exciting aviation event.

Make plans now to visit Missoula for the 1997 Montana Aviation Conference scheduled for February 27–March 1, at the Holiday Inn.

See pages 4 & 5 for more photos.



Trucks, Trains, Planes and Multimodal

Plan to attend the 1996 Burton K. Wheeler Business Roundtable on the future of transportation in Montana. The all-day roundtable will be held at the Bozeman Holiday Inn on April 26th. Seating is limited. A $15 advance registration fee is required. For more information, please call 406/ 994-6765.

Administrator's Column

Sold Down The River: Are we being "sold down the river" by our US International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) representatives? I say YES! We are seeing more and more European rules creeping into the United States through their strong influence in the ICAO. And our US representatives are caving in and letting it happen. There is no argument that the United States leads the WORLD in aviation; we manufacture more aircraft, fly more flight hours, have more airport operations, have more aircraft utilizing the best ATC system at any given time of the day, have the best aviation support facilities, the best quality control and lowest cost aviation fuel, and have the best safety record than any other country. Because of the European and other foreign flight rules there simply is little or no general aviation—in these countries one truly does have to be wealthy to fly. So why do we want to degrade our system by adopting their burdensome and costly aviation rules? I think it is high time we stand up and demand some accountability from our US FAA ICAO representatives.

Aviation Conference Thank You: I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped make this year's aviation conference the resounding success it was. As those of you who have worked on an aviation conference committee know, it takes a lot of time and hard work to make it a success. This years volunteer committee was headed by Ron Mercer and included Martha Kurtz, Paul Graham, Harold Williams, Phil Vittetoe, Phil Porrini, Vicki & Ted Beck and John Semple. The MPA Helena Hangar ladies did the great table decorations. The Aeronautics Division staff headed up by Debbie Alke were also a big part of the work team. The generous contributors and the exhibitors are a major ingredient for a successful conference and of course we couldn't put on a conference without the guest speakers, not just the keynote speakers but the concurrent session speakers. Last, but most important of all are those of you who take time off work to attend and participate. Without you there would be no conference at all! **On behalf of the Aeronautics Board and Division, I wish to thank everyone who participated.**

Congress Asked to Change Federal Grant Program

The General Aviation Airports Coalition (GAAC) appeared before Congress to present proposed changes in the way federal airport funds are distributed. Frank Anderson, Chairman of GAAC, outlined the Coalition's recommendation, including removing the largest 35 self-sufficient airports in the country from the federal program to make the resulting funds available to meet the critical needs of smaller airports.

Annual appropriations have steeply declined. The country's largest airports routinely collect a Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) on airline passengers whose journeys begin or end at their facility. Amounting to $12.5 billion in revenues to only 244 airports in 1996, availability of the PFC means that many of these airports are not self-sustaining and should be removed from the federal program to free increasingly scarce funds for airports with overwhelming needs for new equipment and runways but without the resources of larger, commercial service airports.

Anderson urged the House Subcommittee on Transportation to keep smaller, less fortunate airports in mind when allocating funds and pledged GAAC's willingness to work with Congress to make meaningful changes in the program.

GAAC is a national organization formed in 1995 to represent member airport managers, owners and users in managing, maintaining, developing and promoting airports for the communities in which they serve.

Montana and the Sky
Department of Transportation
Marc Racicot, Governor
Marv Dye, Director

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Kudos to Strand Aviation

(Reprinted — letter from Jerome R. Hok
Flathead High School Aviation Science Instructor)

Since I began teaching aviation at Flathead High School in 1990, Strand Aviation has provided unwavering support for my students. Each year you have entrusted me with a fistful of keys that opened the cockpits of perhaps $500,000 worth of aircraft. This allowed my students to perform preflight inspections, examine and operate control systems, observe instrument displays, listen to aircraft radio transmissions. They looked in on your shop as certified mechanics rebuilt and serviced a variety of flying machines, and reflected on their futures as they gazed out over the cowling of a still-warm Piper, Cessna, or Bellanca. You have provided below-cost introductory flying lessons, offered a discounted short course in basic flight procedures, employed FHA students in your business, and seen several future airline captains through to their first pilot certificate. Truly, you have "touched the future."

Thanks for all you've done over the last five years.

Doolittle Raider Addresses MPA Flathead Hangar

The lone member of Doolittle's Tokyo Raiders who hailed from Montana and participated in the daring bombing of Japan on April 18, 1942, was the guest of the Montana Pilots Association, Flathead Hangar, on March 21.

A WWII movie "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo" accurately portrayed Corporal David Thatcher as an unassuming shy nineteen-year old from Billings, MT. Thatcher served as Crew Chief/Gunner on the B-25 flown by First Lieutenant Ted Lawson. Lawson, in collaboration with Bob Considine, wrote the best selling book upon which the movie was based. Thatcher is credited with saving the lives of his other four, critically injured, crew members after crash landing, at night, into a stormy sea off the China coast.

Mr. Thatcher related a few of his experiences and shared his personal collection of unpublished US Navy photos taken while on board the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Hornet.

Great Northern Air Adventure

An air tour of Northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, with a side trip to the Northwest Territories, will be held June 27–July 4, 1996.

This aviation event is open to all licensed pilots and their guests. The tour begins at CFB Cold Lake, Alberta, with a tour of the fighter training base. It continues to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where on Sunday, June 30th, you can participate in the Governor General's Air Rallye, a test of flying and navigating skills. The air tour then continues northward via the Pas, Thompson and Gillam, to Churchill, Manitoba, on the shores of Hudson's Bay. Side trips may be arranged to arctic settlements in the Northwest Territories.

For further information on the air adventure write 818A - 59th St. East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 5Z6 or call (306)931-8585 or (403)451-5289.

Calendar

March 3–6—Upper Midwest Aviation Symposium, Bismarck, North Dakota.

March 22—Aeronautics Board Meeting, Helena.

April 20—1st Annual, Post-Tax Day, Free Pancake Breakfast Fly-in, Bridger Aviation Services, Progreba Field, Three Forks.

May 4—EAA Chapter 57 Fly-in, Laurel Municipal Airport. Contact: Bob Kimpton (406)259-7010.

May 12—USAF Thunderbirds, Malmstrom AFB, Great Falls. Static displays 10:30–3:30 pm, show time at 3:30 pm. No charge, open to the public. Contact: Len Wheeler (406)449-5270.

June 27–July 4—Great Northern Air Adventure. Call (306)931-8585 or (403)451-5289.

July 13—Annual Hamilton Airport Fly-in and Pancake Breakfast. Contact: Warren Woolley (406)363-0874.

July 13—North Central Fly-In Breakfast and Toy Show, Havre. Contact: John Anderson (406)265-7338.

August 1–7—44th Annual EAA Fly-in Convention, Oshkosh, WI.

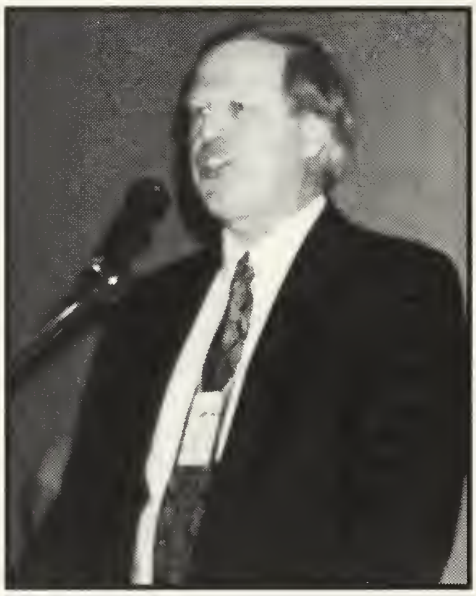
September 20–22—Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell.

September 28—Aerotronics 5th Annual Open House, Billings.

Conference Memories

more photos will appear in future issues

Marc Racicot

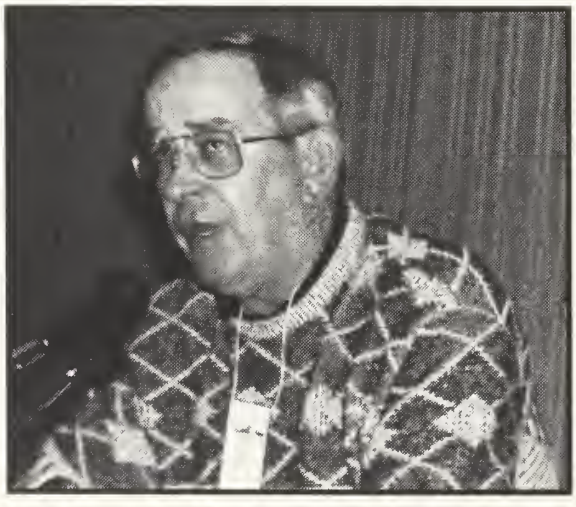


Marv Dye

Turner Gauntt

Governor Marc Racicot, Department of Transportation Director Marv Dye and others welcomed conference participants to Helena and the twelfth annual Montana Aviation Conference. Turner Gauntt was the kickoff luncheon speaker. A former B-58 pilot, Turner is also the proud father of Jeanine Turner—Maggie O'Connell of Northern Exposure.

At left, Mike Ferguson presents to the Helena Regional Airport the Montana Aeronautics Division "1996 Airport of the Year" award for its innovative development projects evidenced by more than twelve new aircraft facilities and development of a commercial center. Receiving the award are Dave Bruck, Chairman, Helena Regional Airport Authority and Ron Mercer, Manager, Helena Regional Airport.

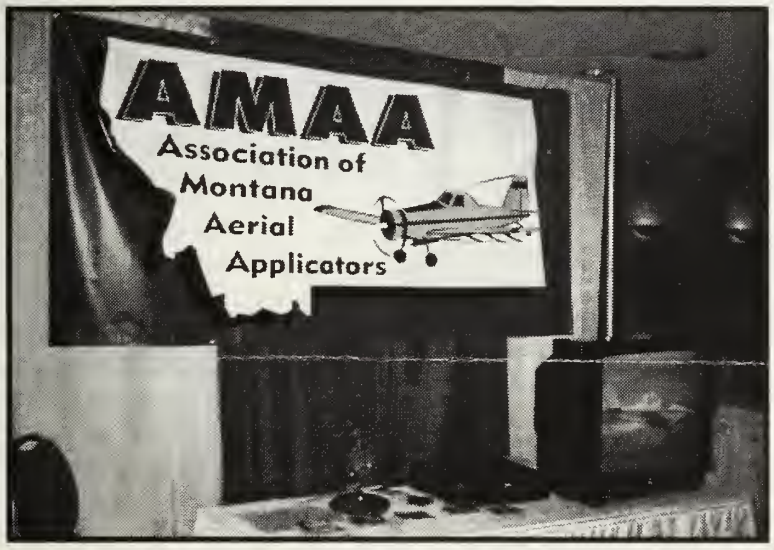


Gary Hunt, Aviation Account Manager, Conoco, Inc., of Houston, Texas, formerly of Billings is a treasured sponsor of the aviation conference. Thank you to all the sponsors who give so generously and help make this conference possible.

A full house was on hand to listen to Dr. Jerry Cockrell. Jerry has relocated to Montana and was returning to the aviation conference this year for his eleventh appearance.

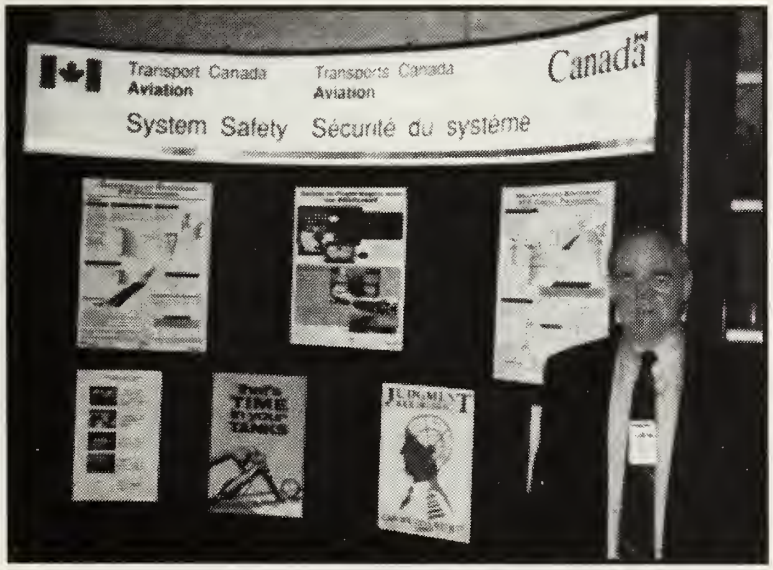
Jim Greil, Phil Porrini and Harold Williams handed out thousands of dollars worth of door prizes at the strolling lunch on Friday.

Anxious onlookers peer over the balcony hoping their number will be called. Thanks to the conference exhibitors and sponsors who generously donate many items each year for giveaway.



Exhibitors were stashed in every nook and cranny of the Colonial Inn. Aviation companies from the United States and Canada offered the latest products and services.

Christi Johnson and Patty Kautz are ready to greet you with a smile at the registration desk. Times were often hectic—not always this calm at registration.

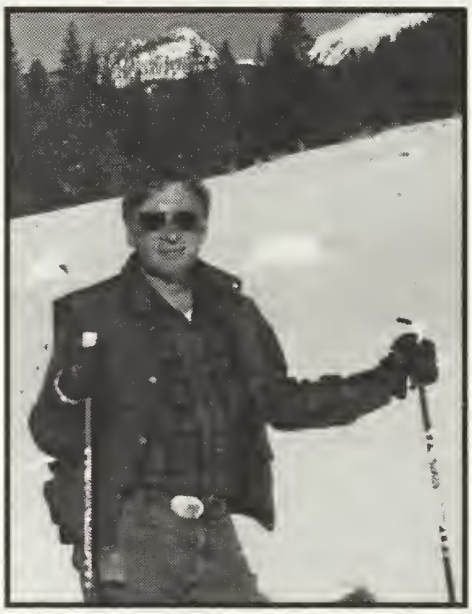


Montana Pilot's Corner

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself to the aviation community of Montana.

I began my career in aviation more by accident than design. I joined the Air Force ROTC in college because they offered me a deferment for military service and the Air Force had the only program on campus. In my junior year someone asked me if I would like to fly. I had never given it much thought, but it sounded exciting and so the next 33 years of my life have been enriched beyond measure, thanks to aviation.

Along the way some very special events have occurred which, taken as a whole, shaped my life. I first remember how being a pilot helped so much in the dating game, wow! Years later, on a very special night, I was alone, faster than Mach 2 and above 50,000 feet. When I placed my hand on the canopy I really believed I touched the face of God. A philosopher said "know thyself" and in the skies over Viet Nam I came to find out. A gift beyond price. After I arrived in Montana there was the solo flight of my first student. I'll never forget, as I watched her pattern, all the things I thought of that I had forgotten to tell her. It seems like only yesterday that Yellowstone was on fire. How many of us were involved and how contemptuous nature was of our efforts. The magnificence of it all will live forever. Now aviation has given me another gift. That is the opportunity to share the skill, the emotions, and the philosophy that arise out of



flying. One never really appreciates a thing until he has a chance to share it.

There are thousands of stories that blaze the trail of a life in aviation. I have not told any because they are for the listener, not the reader. I have instead tried to indicate how important aviation has been, and continues to be for me.

Please stop in next time you are in Bozeman, there is hangar to fly.

To those of you I know, a fond hello. To those of you I don't know, I am looking forward to making your acquaintance.

—Ray Ross

You May Be A Redneck Pilot If:

You have more than one roll of duct tape holding your cowling together.

Part of your preflight involved removing the grass from the landing gear.

You estimate the weight of the mud on your airplane into the CG.

You siphon gas out of your tractor to put in your plane.

You've never actually landed at an airport although you've been flying for decades.

You've ground looped a Cub by hitting a cow.

You consider anything over 100 feet AGL to be "high altitude."

There are actually important parts on your airplane labeled "John Deere."

You've never actually seen a sectional, but have all the Montana road maps for your area (20+ years old).

The green stain under the wing is not a 100 octane fuel leak.

Your local blacksmith has manufactured more than one landing gear part.

—Anonymous

Wings of Light

(Reprinted with permission from *High Flyer*, The Vermont Aviation Newsletter)

Wings of Light, Inc., is a new national non-profit organization dedicated to:

1) providing a support and information network to survivors, family members of victims, and others who have been touched by an aircraft accident;
2) serving as a liaison between individuals affected and the investigative organizations;
3) acting as a referral source to qualified counselors; and
4) bringing about positive change in the industry by speaking on behalf of those who have been touched by an aircraft accident.

Founder Andrea Waas started the organization as a way to deal with the loss of her father in a GA accident. As a pilot, she had the basic knowledge of the organizations involved, but had never experienced the procedures involved in accident investigation.

Unlike other accidents, aircraft accidents undergo a lengthy investigative process; it often takes more than a year for it to be completed. After the initial contact to discuss any "human factors", there is no further contact from the investigators.

"We were in the dark as to the process and the findings," she said. "More importantly, because aviation is statistically a very safe form of transportation, few people have experienced losing someone through an aircraft accident. Friends try to be comforting, but unless they have been through it, they don't completely understand the unique issues involved. Many of Dad's pilot friends talked of leaving aviation; I knew that would have been the last thing Dad would have wanted. He always said it was the safest form of transportation. For his accident to cause others to decide to quit flying just didn't seem right," says Andrea.

For that reason, one of the most important services provided by Wings of Light, Inc. is access to other survivors, family members, and rescue/response personnel who have been through similar experiences.

For more information, please contact Andrea Waas, Wings of Light, Inc. 16845 N. 29th Avenue, Suite 1-448, Phoenix, AZ 85023.

ATTENTION MONTANA AIRSTRIP OWNERS!

The Montana Aeronautics Division is currently in the process of creating it's new 1997 Aeronautical Chart. In order to accomplish this task, the division relies heavily upon you to create the most accurate chart possible. The Division is asking all private airstrip owners to please fill out the information below concerning your airstrip. The data is crucial in helping us list airports on the new chart.

A legal advantage for charting an airport is that an airstrip that is clearly listed on flight publications as being 1) privately owned, 2) not for public use, 3) having possible unreported hazards, 4) at the users own risk and 5) requires prior permission for use, has less liability for the owner than an airstrip that is not charted, but clearly identifiable from the air as an airstrip. This could be construed as an invitation for public use.

If no word is received on an airstrip that is already charted, we will assume the information we last received is correct. If the airstrip is no longer in operation, please let us know so we may delete from the current chart

Please Mail To:

Montana Aeronautics Division
Attn: Jim Greil Aero Chart Revisions
Box 5178
Helena, MT. 59604

AIRSTRIP INFORMATION

Name of Airstrip (as to be depicted) _____

Name of Owner _____

Owners Mailing Address _____

Owners Phone Number _____

AIRSTRIP LOCATION

Latitude _____ Longitude_____ County_____

Nearest Town _____ Direction From Town _____ Distance _____

Section _____ Township _____ Range _____

Is your airport open to the public (public use*)? ☐ Yes ☐ No (*Public use: No prior permission required, user does NOT assume own risk)

Comments or additional info._____

_____

_____

AIRSTRIP DATA

Runway Direction	Length	Width	Approach Obstructions
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Airport Elevation _____ Unicom Radio? ☐ Yes ☐ No Frequency? _____

Fuel Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No Octane _____

Telephone Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No Phone Number _____

Airstrip Owner's Signature _____

2nd Annual Montana Aviation Giveaway Results

Congratulations to all of the winners of this year's annual aviation giveaway. Unexpectedly, we had a grand prize winner as well as 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The grand prize is awarded only if a person is 100% correct. The results and the associated prizes for the winners are listed below.

Congratulations to:

Grand Prize Winner
Pat Lifto, Glendive — 16 out of 16

1st Place Winner
Phil Porrini, Helena — 9 out of 16

2nd Place Winner
Rob Brist, Kila — 8 out of 16

3rd Place Winner
Bill Massey, Hot Springs — 2 out of 16

Grand Prize:
- *Montana and the Sky* by Frank Wiley
- *Mountain Flying* by Sparky Imeson
- *Survival Sense* by LaValla and Stoffel
- Survival Quick Reference Cards
- Montana Aeronautical Chart
- Montana Airport Directory
- Montana Aeronautics Division Hat

1st Place:
- *Montana and the Sky*
- *Mountain Flying*
- *Survival Sense*

2nd Place:
- *Montana and the Sky*
- Survival Reference Cards
- Montana Division Aeronautics Hat

3rd Place:
- *Montana and the Sky*
- Montana Aeronautical Chart
- Montana Airport Directory

Thirty-two hundred copies of this public document were produced at an estimated cost of 27¢ each, for a total cost of $864. This includes $120 for production, $526 for postage and $220 for printing.

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